

Steady Steps Outdoors: An Outdoor Fall Prevention Program

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Introduction

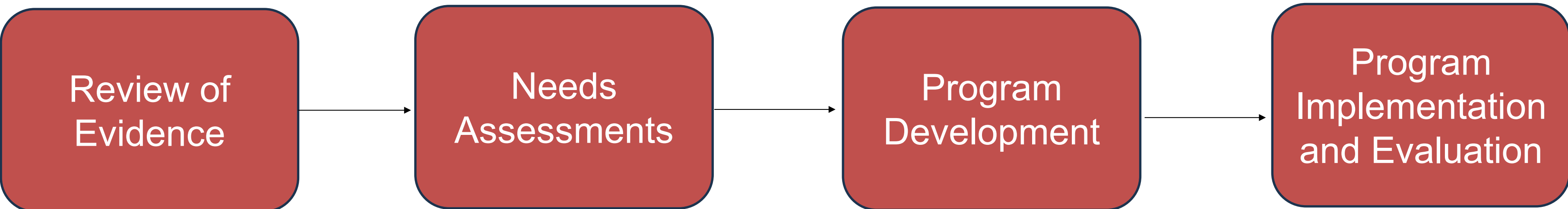
- One in three adults aged 65 and up fall each year (Chase et al., 2012).
- 50% of falls occur outdoors in community dwelling older adults (Kelsey et al., 2010).
- Most older adults are unaware of outdoor risk factors and that they are different from indoor risk factors and usually can not be easily modifiable (Chippendale, 2019).
- Failure to dissociate between indoor and outdoor falls in the past have led to completely missing factors and associations important to falls (Kelsey et al., 2010).

Aim
1. Evaluate and synthesize the aspects of previous fall prevention programs and their effectiveness
2. Create an Outdoor Fall Prevention and Community Mobility Program for older adults
3. Create an outdoor falls resource sheet for occupational therapy practitioners

Procedures

This project was broken up into two sections to address both the needs for outdoor fall prevention programs for older adults and current evidence-based resources for occupational therapy practitioners.

Older Adults



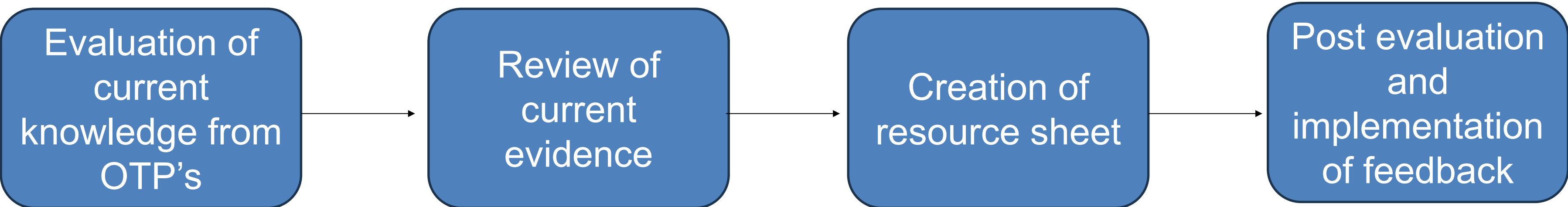
Participants and Setting

Community dwelling older adults 55 years of age or older who are members of the Clinton Older Adults center. This program was administered in person at the Clinton Center.

Topics

Topics that were discussed in this program included outdoor fall risk factors, personal risk factors, public transportation, assistive devices, strategies and techniques to reduce falls.

Occupational Therapy Practitioners



Participants

Survey was created using Qualtrics and uploaded to CommunOT to recruit participants. OTP's (occupational therapy practitioners) who completed the survey provided an email to receive a completed resource sheet along with a post-survey.

Health Belief Model

- Focuses on how individuals perceive health threats and the changes they make on a particular goal (Alyafei & Easton-Carr, 2024).
- This model will help influence the behaviors of the participants' attitudes towards falls and in time motivate them to take preventative actions.

Findings

Older Adults

History of Outdoor Falls	Percentage of Falls
Past 12 months	55.6%

- Fall commonly occurred in the street and parks
- Participants who indicated having a fear of falling had experienced falls in the past

Program Implementation	Older adults
# of Participants	9
Gender	Female
Age Range	69-87
Age Mean (SD)	76.8 (3.86)

63.9% of the participants demonstrated retained information

Feedback

- Knowledge was applicable to daily life
- Participants intend to use the information to increase their safety when walking outdoors and in the community

Occupational Therapy Practitioners

Evaluation of Current Knowledge from OTP's	Post Survey
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 64% stated that they address outdoor falls in sessions• Outdoor fall prevention was implemented into sessions through<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education• Functional mobility activities• Screening and assessments• Assistive aid recommendations• Taking clients into the community prior to discharge to practice skills• 67% stated that they would implement outdoor fall prevention if they were provided with more knowledge on the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information provided in the resource sheet was up to date with relevant resources to support the topic of outdoor falls• Provided new material to further their knowledge on outdoor falls• OTP's were likely to incorporate the information into their sessions with clients

Conclusions

- There is a need for outdoor fall prevention programs to address the risk factors associated with outdoor falls.
- Outdoor fall prevention education is beneficial in increasing fall prevention strategies and techniques in older adults.
- It is within OT's scope of practice to address outdoor falls with their clients to increase their knowledge and safety.

Challenges

- Small group of participant who were given the presentation – only female participants.
- Not all occupational therapy practitioners completed post survey before deadline.

Recommendations

- Outdoor fall prevention is not well studied in occupational therapy. Future studies should assess the significance in outdoor fall education in the older adult population.
- OT practitioners should consider continued education on outdoor falls to ensure proper education for clients.

Acknowledgements

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